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sound as though they are deliberate, rather than the spontaneous reaction to pain or trouble. One small boy, perhaps four or five years old, used to sit on the ground and howl; after awhile, if taken no notice of, he would put his head on the ground between his feet and howl still more loudly, kicking first with one foot and then with the other. No one would pay any attention to him, unless after ten minutes or so an older child went to him and picked him up and carried him off. Gaua, a girl of five or six, used to have a howling fit of this sort every time her father went off on some expedition, because she wanted to go too. She was always left to howl till she stopped of her own accord. Gaua rarely cried for any other reason, except occasionally when she wanted a piece of taro. Another little girl, about the same age, used to be constantly having fits of what seemed like hysterical sobbing, in which she almost choked herself. I could never find out any cause for such behaviour, and her mother said she did not know why the child did it. A typical incident proceeded thus: She lay on the ground with her head down, howling loudly enough to be heard all over the village. For a long time no one took any notice of her, then another child went up and spoke to her. This had no effect whatever. Her mother went to her. She stopped just long enough to cough, and then continued to howl. Her mother pulled her on to her feet and towards the house; she kicked and struggled all the time, but the woman was very gentle with her, making no attempt to slap her. Presently her mother picked her up; she was quiet for a few minutes, but soon started yelling again, whereupon her mother put her on the ground again and went indoors. She lay there howling for some time.

Children are sometimes scolded, but only very rarely have I seen any one lift a hand to a child, much less a stick or other weapon, though they sometimes threaten to do so. Once, for example, a small boy came up crying to his mother, who was sweeping in front of the hut. She lifted her broom as if to hit him, but did not do so. He lay on the ground screaming for some time, she took no more notice of him, but went on with her sweeping. Sometimes a threat of this kind is made in fun, and is so understood by the child. A small boy held out a coco-nut to a woman, pretending to offer it to her, but when she put out a hand to take it he snatched it back. She had just come in from a canoe trip, and had a paddle in her hand. She pretended to hit him with it, and they both

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861 laughed. But I have seen children really frightened by the jokes of their elders, as ours are by threats of 'the bogy man'. Pasab told his little daughter Beawon that something she had eaten by the road had poison in it. She cried, and all the people standing round laughed at her.

863 As a rule but little notice is taken of the habits of children as regards natural functions. They follow the example of their elders. But if a child is seen to be about to relieve himself in front of the 854 row of huts, he will be scolded and sent round to the back. Mothers clean their babies with bundles of leaves, which are then thrown away casually into the bush. But the excreta of a baby who is [565] *tsunaun* must, while he is very small, be collected carefully and thrown into a special enclosure on the beach because he is specially liable to danger from 'poison'.

## CHILDREN'S PLAY

857 Although it is true that these children take up a life not very different from that of their elders, at a much earlier age than do our own children, yet I think they have, on the whole, a happy childhood. There is plenty of scope for the development of character, and some children seem to possess individuality to a marked degree. Life is never so serious that there is not time for play and laughter, even for adults, and the children certainly have their fill of both.

While they are little, children of both sexes play together, but as soon as the boy reaches the age when he puts on the *tapi*, which may sometimes be as young as seven or eight (approximately), but usually, apparently, about nine or ten, he is forbidden to play or have any close converse with the girls and women, so these boys form a 'gang' of their own both for games and also for work, in so far as they do not join with the older men in fishing and hunting expeditions, &c. The little girls very early take up their share in the routine work of the village, fetching water, collecting shell-fish on the reef, going to the taro garden, or looking after the babies, and there does not seem to be any tendency for the girls of the village to form a gang. They are more often to be seen going about in twos or threes, or with the older women. Even before the age of segregation, the little boys seemed more often to be playing by themselves than with the little girls, perhaps because the girls were more likely to be engaged in the daily round. No duties seem

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stood to him in the relation of *pi'an* (cross-cousin), and as he was therefore prohibited from touching his skin, another man was specially appointed to perform the duty of putting on the paint. 882 302

They may not decorate themselves with a plant called *tsutsuir*, which is much liked by these people and is frequently worn tucked into the arm-band. This prohibition is removed after the watawutch ceremony. 882 301 824

IV. *Other regulations.*

In the olden days, boys wearing the *upi* were not allowed to handle edged tools. They might help to clear the bush, but all cutting was done by the *amro*. This taboo is no longer enforced. 882 412

A boy wearing the *upi* may not be beaten by anybody, no matter what his offence. Those who break this taboo will die. Specific instances were cited of people who had done so—and had died. It is permissible for two boys to fight each other, though it is difficult to imagine how they could do so effectively without first removing their head-gear. 882 861

In recent years, with the increase in the practice of going away to work for white men, another rule has been made, that the boys wearing the *upi* may not sign on as indentured labourers. For some time after putting on the hat they must not work for white men at all, but after their hair has grown to some length they can work as casuals, provided they work on a plantation near enough to their own village to enable them to return to it each night. They are not allowed to remove their *upi* while at work. After they have been through the *watawutʃ* they may sign on as indentured labourers and are permitted, if they wish, to remove the *upi* and tie up their hair in a bit of cloth; this is done to keep it out of the way rather than to prevent it from being seen, since the prohibition on showing it is removed at the *watawutʃ*. 882 464 [292]

A further complication is now caused by the boarding-schools instituted by the various missions. A boy from Ruri who went to one of these had his *upi* removed by the priest. His people were very angry, but the affair was not as bad as it might have been, because the lad had been through the *watawutʃ* ceremony. It was legitimized by making a feast at Ruri, to which the Kurtatchi people were invited; this brought the matter to my notice. (Incidentally, those who went said it wasn't much of a feast, there was only one pig and some taro, and they got only very little apiece!) 882 797 871 292 788